



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

SPEED UP

Interreg Europe

GOOD PRACTICES GUIDE

Incubation services and their financial sustainability



Introduction

SPEED UP project

SPEED UP project aims to improve the implementation of policy instruments under Structural Funds programmes dedicated to support of entrepreneurship, in particular concerning business incubation. To achieve this aim, the project will support collective learning and capacity building between partner organizations and relevant stakeholders that provide support to business creation, development and growth.

The main goals are to:

- improve services provided by business incubators and ensure their financial sustainability;
- deepen the cooperation among public authorities, business sector, universities and R&D institutions;
- enable support to specific target groups, like young people, migrants or female entrepreneurs;
- develop performance monitoring systems for incubators and hosted startups.

Main actions include:

- exchange of experiences on the ways partners support their business incubators
- benchmarking of experiences against those of their peers
- learning about what works and what doesn't in different contexts
- developing action plans to put into action lessons learned from the cooperation

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The second semester of the project “SPEED UP - Supporting Practices for Entrepreneurship Ecosystems in the Development of Urban Policies” was dedicated to the topic “Scope and relevance of incubation services (mentoring, coaching, access to finance, networking, clustering) and their financial sustainability”.

Besides the range of services offered by Business Incubators in the partners’ territories, SPEED UP evaluated as well their implementation on the ground. This included the acquisition of start-ups, the specialization of Business Incubators on certain sectors, their cooperation with regional partners and the access to finance and investments, with a special attention paid to the financial sustainability of the incubation model (project financing, private financing, real estate income, sponsorship deals and incubation fees).

This guidebook provides an overview about the exchange of experience based on the identification and analysis of Good Practices carried out through desk research, project meetings and study visits. SPEED UP developed an assessment framework defining criteria and relevant indicators for the identification and selection of Good Practices.

During the first year of the project, the partnership of the project composed by 9 organizations has activated their stakeholder networks, identified regional Good Practices and exchanged their experience during the Interregional Thematic Seminar held in Seville on Nov. 2016. As a result, five Good Practices has been identified as Good Practices for this first topic.

SPEED UP has identified four main aspects related to this topic that have been furtherly deepen during the first Interregional Training Workshop held in Berlin on March 2017 with the participation of several European experts.

The presentations provided during these meetings and a video documentation are published at the project website www.interregeurope.eu/speedup/

As result of these exchanges, it can be stated that the Business Incubators show various models of Business Incubation in terms of both financing of the Incubator and services offered for the start-ups. There is not an unique optimal Business Incubation model, but several successful models based on quantitative and qualitative aspects and resources. A common feature of these models is the support provided by the regional institutions and the wide range of services offered to accelerate business development.

As the potential transferability of the Good Practices represents one of the main criteria for their selection, a business incubation model should be transferable without major changes in order to be considered a Good Practice. It means that the model has to show a “concept-readiness” in terms of its viability and implementation in other territories as well as demonstrate a strong performance.

On the other side, institutions must demonstrate an “institutional readiness” to adapt the concept accurately. This includes quantitative (facilities, laboratories, staff management etc.) and qualitative (level of specialization, access to scientific knowledge) resources that need to be assured and developed.

Furthermore, a transferable model should not rely on major technical or financial investments.



Good Practices

The following Business Incubation models have been chosen as Good Practices for the topic "Incubation services and their financial sustainability"

Programa Minerva

Location: Sevilla/Spain

Established Companies: **33**

Created jobs: **155**

Raised investment by start-ups: **2,8** million EUR

Financing of the Incubator: Public-private partnership between the Regional Government of Andalusia and Vodafone

Quantification of resources / Quantifiable levels of resources and qualification needed:

- Access to technical Know-How
- Partnership with a company
- Financial support of start-ups
- Network of regional partners to ensure a full coverage of support services
- Support start-ups in the acquisition of investment
- Product testing

Innovative character:

- Cooperation between a regional government (Junta de Andalusia) and a market leader company (Vodafone)
- Personalized support service across the region, it is not required that the company works physically in the Business Incubator

Startup Lisboa

Location: Lisboa/Portugal

Established Companies: **240**

Created jobs: **1000+**

Financing of the Incubator: Partnership between Lisboa Municipality, Portuguese Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation and Bank Montepio Geral

Quantification of resources / Quantifiable levels of resources and qualification needed:

- Business incubation advisory online
- Merchandising as an alternative model. The incubator "Startup Lisboa" is already a brand
- Additional services for start-ups through the programmes „The Host" and „Airport Business Center" to accelerate international business cooperations
- Network of sponsors

Innovative Character:

- Special services through the programme „The Host"
- Merchandise as a source of financing
- Focus on sponsors

Start-up Incubator - Tehnopol Tallinn

Location: Tallin/Estonia

Established Companies: **163**

Created jobs: **38**

Financing of the Incubator: Fee from incubated companies; Success fee; Sponsorship deals, Real-estate income

Quantification of resources/Quantifiable levels of resources and qualification needed:

- Fees from incubated companies
- Network of investors
- Support start-ups in the acquisition of investment
- Level of specialization: technical knowledge, access to scientific knowledge
- Financial support for incubated companies (up to 10.000 EUR)
- Product testing

Innovative Character:

- Fee system
- Strong focus on investments, start-ups already acquire around 11 Million EUR
- Sponsorship deals
- Mixture of finance, not only one source

Nana Bianca

Established companies: **25**

Established jobs: **215**

Financing of the Incubator: Private and public funds (distribution of funds to start-ups)

Quantification of resources / Quantifiable levels of resources and qualification needed:

- Financial support of start-ups (25.000 EUR)
- Network of private investors
- Support start-ups in the acquisition of investment
- Offering a crowdfunding-platform
- Public funding for acceleration program

Innovative Character:

- Seed investment for start-ups
- Cooperation with public funding program in distribution of grants

Young companies/green companies

Location: East Brandenburg

Established companies: **591**

Financing of the Business Incubator: Public funding

Quantification of resources / Quantifiable levels of resources and qualification needed:

- Start-up support among all sectors
- Several contact points
- Network of regional partners (Federal Employment Agency, Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Crafts)
- Network of external experts
- Product testing

Innovative Character:

- Start-up support by decentralized system among several locations
- Start-up support in the rural area

Programa Minerva

Programa Minerva is a business incubator promoted and supported financially by the regional government (Junta de Andalucía) and the private company VODAFONE in the framework of an agreement of collaboration between both organisations. The main objective of Minerva is to support entrepreneurs to turn their ideas into a business opportunity and new start-ups accelerating the exit of their developments to the market. Although the business incubator has physical spaces to host the companies, it does not require the company to be physically in the incubators, since the support services are personalised and delivered according to the needs of the companies. In this way the companies can be located all around the Andalusia Region through the network of centres "Andalusia Emprende" where the project receive the support services. The projects located in the city of Seville have access to incubation facilities of offices and co-working area.

The programme offers 30.000 euros of financial support to the five most promising projects in each call. Besides this financial support, the entrepreneurs have access to a service check, a package of economic and technology resources to support the acceleration of the start-up.

Programa Minerva has introduced several innovations, such as:

- the leadership of a private company, Vodafone Spain, supported by the regional government, Junta de Andalucía: both supporting institutions are very operative in the activities of the incubator, and committed to assure its sustainability.
- the objective to identify tech developments focused in smart city solutions.
- the Minerva Forum integrated by companies and organisations that are part of the entrepreneurship, innovation and technology development ecosystem of Andalusia. The objective of this forum is to offer support to business projects by means of networking meetings, seminars and workshops open to all the local entrepreneurs.

Keys steps and activities

The main target group of the Minerva Programme are IT business projects located in the Andalusia Region. The business project can be in any development stage, from the seed stage up to launching their products or services to the market (except projects in advanced stage of commercialisation). The last call (2016) dedicated a special focus to projects related to smart cities. The calls for new business projects are launched each year with 20 openings for new projects in each call. However it is not compulsory to fulfill all 20 openings if the level of the projects doesn't reach the quality standards.

The selected projects are mentored during a period of 8-10 months. The Minerva acceleration support services are funded in three basic principles: business strategy, communication and sales.

During the acceleration stage, the entrepreneurs have access to training, seminars and conferences targeting the development of entrepreneur's competences. The training programme includes, among other many subjects, advanced knowledge in business modelling, legal creation of a company, sales and marketing, finances, internationalisation and search for business partners. The training also includes communication skills to help young entrepreneurs to make successful presentations to clients and investors.

Besides the group training, the participating projects have access to:

- 1 Advisory services delivered by experts.
- 2 Strategy consultancy services in communication.
- 3 Personal training and mentoring in sales skills delivered by Vodafone staff.



As the company achieves each programme stage, it receives a check of services that can be exchanged for services that provide an impulse to the consolidation of the company. The service check offers different options, such as:

- Financial support to pay salary expenses of staff during 6 months.
- Technology packages including products and other services according to the needs of the each individual company.
- Support to activities related to communication and sales

The Minerva Programme implements also a communication plan to showcase the participating business projects to the local media.

After the accelerating stage, the business projects become part of the Minerva Forum where the projects keep receiving support in communication and sales.

Results

Until the call 2015, Minerva had the following results:

- 49 business projects participating in the calls from 2012 to 2015.
- The rate of success for accelerated business projects is 75%.
- The business activities include e-health (24%), culture and leisure (22%), marketing and business management (19%), education (16%), IT (8%), agrotech (5%) and Smart city (5%).
- From the 49 projects participating the first three calls, 37 stay active in the programme and 33 are already graduated enterprises. 49% of the business projects are commercialising their services/products.
- The 49 business projects have created and maintained 155 jobs.
- Since the first call in 2012, the programme has been able to obtain over 2.8 million of euros in investments funds and the companies have sold over 1.9 million of euros.

Lessons learnt

- Promote the entrepreneurship culture is basic to change the mind-set of the society.
- The educational system has to integrate the learning of entrepreneurship competences and creativity skills.
- Set a real entrepreneurship ecosystem generating synergies among the diverse programmes and initiatives.
- Address main weaknesses of the entrepreneurship ecosystem, in particular finance fund access and capital relational capital.

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Startup Lisboa

Startup Lisboa is an incubator for start-up companies, based in Lisbon's downtown (Baixa) that currently has two historical buildings with workspaces to welcome entrepreneurs and start-up companies in Tech, Commerce and Tourism areas, and a residence for entrepreneurs (Casa Startup Lisboa). But is not just one more incubator. It's an incubator with special characteristics: it is the result of the will of the citizens who had voted in this project in the Participatory Budgeting, a public initiative promoted by the Municipality of Lisbon; "Startup Lisboa" was implemented with a decisive role played by private partners. Located in the historical central area of the city, it is part of an urban regeneration initiative including the reuse of historical buildings. It is a central node of a network of incubators and acceleration spaces (both public and private) that are being developed in the city. And, "Startup Lisboa" is truly international and cosmopolitan because of entrepreneurs from different countries participating to the programme. Opened in 2012, it is a private nonprofit association, which counts on three founding entities: Lisbon Municipality, Portuguese Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (IAPMEI) and Bank Montepio Geral. The main goal of Startup Lisboa is to support the development and growth of start-ups, helping them to attract customers and investors, to scale up and to become global.

Startup Lisboa supports the development and growth of the incubated start-ups, helping them to attract customers and investors, to scale up and become global. Its incubation model includes the assignment of workspaces with a cost below market value. Also, Startup Lisboa establishes a link to mentors (founders, CEO, specialists) to help entrepreneurs develop their business; provides access to partners that offer or make available at a lower price specialized services; connects entrepreneurs to business angels, venture capital investors and other top financing sources; promotes the knowledge sharing between the entrepreneurs, and networking events, like workshops and mentoring sessions.

The innovation accompanied its life, as it is the only incubator in the region that has a residence for entrepreneurs, a tourism programme to attract entrepreneurs to the city, a merchandising line to promote Lisbon as a city of entrepreneurship, and also a programme (The Host) that promotes the free circulation of start-ups among the partner incubators around the world.

Startup Lisboa has three sources of financing:

- Own revenues: Incubation services; Merchandising; Vertical accelerators; Airport Business Center
- Lisbon Municipality support
- Companies support (Montepio Geral, Caixa Geral de Depósitos and Portugal Telecom)

Keys steps and activities

Startup Lisboa has open applications during all the year. In order to apply candidates have to fill in an online form in the website of the incubator. Each two months Startup Lisboa chooses the best applications and invite the aspirant entrepreneurs to present their pitch in front of a jury. The best projects/start-ups are selected to be incubated for up to three years. The project will be analyzed considering the following evaluation criteria which must be met in full:

- Project with an innovative product / service;
- Product / service with global character, that is scalable;
- Reasonableness and feasibility of the project submitted;
- Capacity of implementation by the promoting team;
- Contribution to a greater competitiveness and innovation of the city of Lisbon;
- Financial sustainability and big growth potential.



Appreciation criteria are:

- Product / service developed by the promoter / team of promoters;
- Creation of employment;
- Project that looks into the urban regeneration of the city of Lisbon.

Once start-ups start their journey at the incubator, they have an initial meeting with the incubator's team to understand where they are, what are their needs and how Startup Lisboa can help them. After that, the team puts them in touch with mentors (founders and/or specialists that can help them develop their business) and partners that offer or make available at a lower price specialized services. Every week the incubator runs workshops and networking events that start-ups can access according to their interest. When start-ups start looking for investment the incubator's team puts them in touch with investors. Follow-up meetings to understand where the start-ups are take place periodically.

Results

Metrics of Startup Lisboa since the beginning of its activity (less than 5 years):

- more than **3500** applications
- **240** start-ups supported
- more than **500** entrepreneurs supported, from more than 35 countries
- more than **60** Millions Euros raised investment
- more than **1000** jobs created

Lessons learnt

- It is very important for incubators to be autonomous entities from the local authorities, even though they receive financial support from them. This independency facilitates all processes and influences positively the perception of the general public regarding the incubator.
- Incubators shouldn't look at start-ups as their main source of financing. Start-ups should pay to be incubated, because it contributes to increase their responsibility regarding the institution. However, the fee they pay should be below the market value, to help them in starting their activity. Incubators should look also to other sources of financing.
- Incubation is not about renting office spaces. Incubators have to be able to help the start-ups developing their businesses.
- It is crucial to promote a culture of proximity with all actors of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The secret of success lies in the partnerships established.

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Start up
Lisboa



Building a self-sustainable business incubator.

Case study of Startup Incubator

Startup Incubator is a business development program for early stage technology start-up companies, one of the strategic services provided by Tallinn Science Park Tehnopol, established in 2003 by Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs, Tallinn City and Tallinn University of Technology. It is operating starting from 2005, providing one-year development program including coaching, trainings and physical co-working location for the start-up companies in the areas of ICT, health technologies and green technologies. Startup Incubator has worked with 160 start-up companies. 60% of these companies are sustainably operating today and have raised around 11 millions Euro of follow up private investments. The portfolio of Startup Incubator has 35 start-up companies in the program constantly.

It is working with early stage start-up companies that have scalable business model, prototype of the product or service and full scale team to launch the product in international markets. Startup Incubator invests up to 10 000 euros' worth of expertise to a start-up company in one-year program to bring the company to sustainable revenue (200.000+ Euro annually) or seed round private investment (100.000+ Euro).

It is the only program in the region that has special tech-focus and competence build around the focus areas, designed to attract private capital to tech-based companies and provide access to global markets. Moreover, the Startup Incubator is strongly linked to one of the largest technological university on the region, the Tallinn University of Technology.

Throughout the years of operations Startup Incubator has developed a set of services tailored for high-growth start-up companies. The main components of the service portfolio are the following:

1. Hands-on coaching – Startup Incubator has more than 50 hands on business coaching working with the companies daily. The main areas of expertise covered by the business coaches are business model development, sales and marketing, investor readiness and raising capital, legal, product development and design, team-building etc. On average the business coaches dedicate around 1.000 hours to coach the portfolio of Startup Incubator.
2. Training program – Startup Incubator is organizing trainings, seminars, networking events, investor panels and business missions to the start-up companies. The aim of the program is to level the skills of start-up entrepreneurs and bring the companies closer to the investment or potential client. There are around 50 different events annually with more than 1.500 community members participating.
3. Co-working hub – The co-working hub at Tallinn Science Park Tehnopol has around 500m2 of open office areas, small offices and meeting rooms for the companies.

Startup incubator has a mixed funding scheme to keep the sustainability. The main components are:

- Fee from the companies – monthly fee the companies are paying for the program;
- Success fee – one-time fee the companies are paying based on achieving the revenue or investment goals;
- Sponsorship deals – private companies supporting the program to gain the visibility;
- Real-estate income – rental payments of the companies in the program.



Keys steps and activities

Startup Incubator is working with the companies in commitment, validation and scaling phases.



1. Applying to the program – companies and teams can apply to the program weekly and the evaluation panels (investors, mentors) come together each Thursday to screen the projects. Applying companies have 5-minute presentation followed by 15-minute Q&A session to the panel. Based on that the decision is made.
2. Participating the program – companies can be in the program up to 1 year. The main component of the program is coaching and business mentoring. Each team will be assigned a key-coach (a person who knows the business area and monitors the performance of the team weekly). If the company need external advice, a pool of mentors will be used to help the team in following areas – business modeling, sales, marketing, PR, investor readiness, product development and prototyping.
3. Ending the program – the contract between Startup Incubator and the company will be ended if the company raises successfully €100k+ of private investments; or has an annual revenue of €200k+. The company fails the program if the key-coach reports of having no progress in the performance of the team or the company fails to generate revenue or attract the investment.

Results

Startup Incubator has worked with 163 companies. All these companies can be considered as established companies. The survival rate of the companies is around 65% and the companies have raised around 11 millions Euro of follow-up private investments. Startup Incubator has around 100 applications to the program annually and the program can work with maximum of 35 companies.

Lessons learnt

Startup Incubator indicates five main takeaways:

1. Start-up companies are willing to pay for the services if the program is competitive and understandable for them.
2. Pipeline is the biggest value that the incubators have. It can be capitalized and the buzz among the investors bring more good quality companies to the program.
3. Business incubators are competitive in comparison with private acceleration programs because of the long term commitment. It is valuable in building long-term collaboration with start-up companies and to the community of private investors.
4. Operating in real market conditions gives a good quality assessment discipline and motivation to the business incubator team. It helps to build a world-class service in really competitive market.
5. Incubators should establish a fixed mixed portfolio of income to be successful.

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General Information about the company/organisation

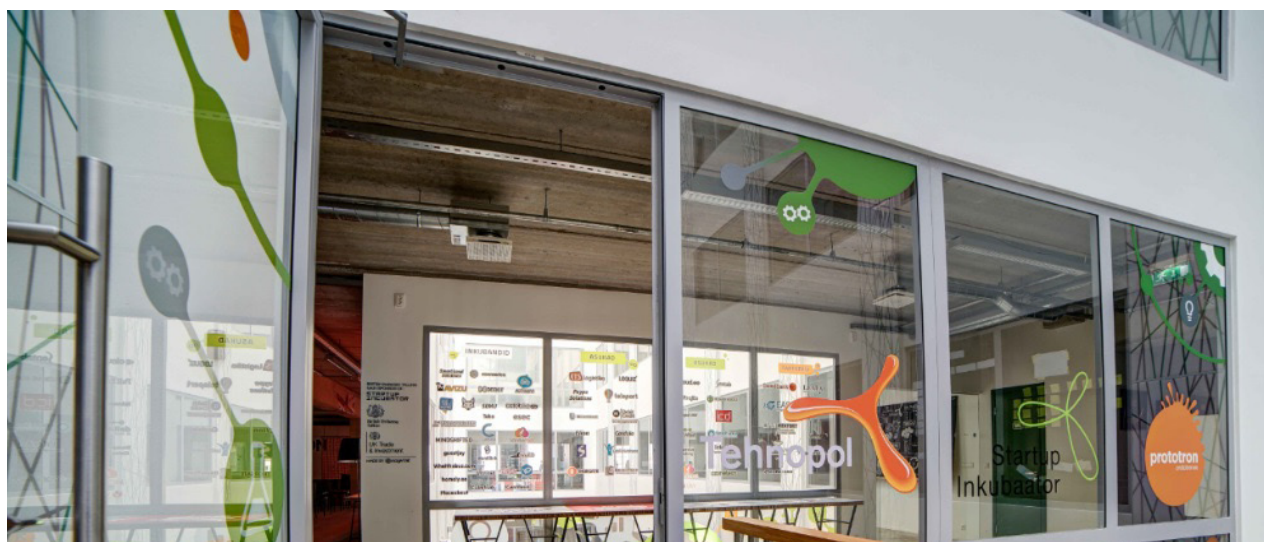
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Nana Bianca: private management and public partnership

Nana Bianca was founded in 2011 by Alessandro Sordi, Jacopo Marelli and Paolo Barberis. The three gained previous experience with the founding and managing of Dada Mobile, a company offering B2B digital services and end-user digital products.

Today, Nana Bianca manages a coworking spaces, a start-up studio (venture building) and an acceleration program. No limitation is placed on its lifetime.

Nana Bianca is cooperating with public stakeholders in the distribution of public funded grants through its acceleration program and in the renovation of public areas to accommodate its expansion plans.

The main objective of Nana Bianca is the scouting and accelerating of promising business ideas, with the purpose of realizing satisfying capital gains in the stake of acquisition and selling of such entities. Main target group are young entrepreneurs from all over Italy, preferably aged between 18 and 35.

In order to maximize both the number of companies successfully founded and their relative revenue size, a broader ecosystem-building plan is being put in place.

- A modern coworking space is currently being managed in Via Ippolito Pindemonte, where contamination, clustering and networking is highly encouraged on every level.
- The acceleration program is currently running on a rolling base, with ideas being scrutinized against team background, business feasibility and actual support being available for the particular area of business.
- By 2020 Nana Bianca shall have its school for business and IT.
- This will add up to the expansion of available co-working space (up to 6.000 sq m)

Private funds have until recently mounted to 25.000 Euro for seed investments. Public grants given through the acceleration program will total 50.000 Euro for each project. The model is shifting to self-sustainability. Coworking, School, services and capital gains will gradually provide for later investments.

Keys steps and activities

Upon admission to the acceleration program, the successful candidates are expected to attend a number of education classes aimed at developing a broader knowledge of company operations. This adds to a set of services offered either free or highly discounted: management of online marketing campaigns, UX/UI, finance, Business Development and IT.

Founders are expected to attend and make the most of services offered, with seeds funds being distributed upon milestones achievements. Milestones are peculiar to each start up. It may go from company incorporation to product prototype, to website launch, to first sale achieved.

The typical acceleration program runs six months against equity. A seed investment of 25.000 is released. Number of services offered are discounted marketing management, temporally-defined UX/UI consulting and operational support, mentor and tutor assignment and listing of basic milestones.

Results

A total of 28 companies have been funded and/or accelerated. A minority of these companies were created through the company building model, with Entrepreneurs in Residence being hired on a later stage. As of today, the average is around 300 applications to the acceleration program.

As of today, survival is higher than 90%.

Short time effect of the incubator presence is number of innovative start-ups founded in the region, given the relative weakness of the sector. Long term effects related to eco-system quality, given the building up of special relationships with universities, private and public entities.

Lessons learnt

- Clear Revenue model (co-working, services, education)
- Clear territorial scope (clustering of resources, business district formation)
- Clear goal in terms of activity expansions (business execution).

General Information about the company/organisation

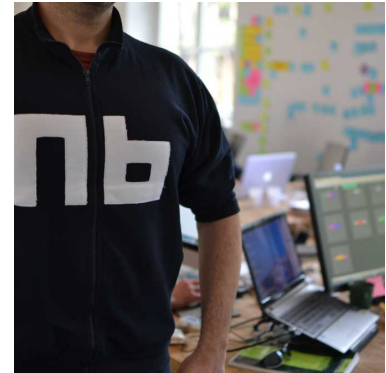
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Young companies / green companies

young companies is an business incubation model for young people up to 30 years. The business incubation model is funded by the European Social Fund and national funds. Young companies is part of a program started in 2004. It is a successfully proven policy instrument to foster young entrepreneurship since the beginning. The main objective is to support young people starting their own business by personal coaching, seminars, workshops, webinars, access to funding programs and networking events. young companies is cooperating closely with a network of regional authorities (city halls, chamber of commerce and start-up centers). In this way the business incubator provides several locations in East Brandenburg to assure wide range start-up support in a mostly sparsely populated and rural area.

Young companies has worked with over 1100 participants, 600 started their own companies. After 3 years of company foundation over 70% are still on the market. As the project promotes incubated entrepreneurs until business creation special attention is given to provide access to support services after company foundation offered by regional network. young companies creates career perspective for young people and avoids the outflow of young people in other regions. Project experiences show that young people starting their business in Eastern Brandenburg rather moving to other regions in their later career than employees. The project strengthens the entrepreneurial culture in the region which leads to economic growth. Furthermore local companies are connected by a strong network which is required for successful business development.

green companies is a pilot project aiming on green entrepreneurship in North-East-Brandenburg. The program provides workshops and seminars to improve business plan, product development and marketing strategies. Special attention is given to product presentation both trade fairs and own shops. green companies is winner of the StartGreen Award 2016 – a German-wide contest – as best initiative promoting innovative start-ups in the Green Economy. In order of scaling up green and young entrepreneurs both projects cooperates closely with several regional actors/multipliers to active entrepreneurship of young people, such as: National Employment Agency, Chamber of Crafts/Chamber of Commerce, Economic promotion agencies, financial institution, ministries, districts, schools, consulting companies. Furthermore, young companies project is participating in different network addressed to entrepreneurs: network ExistenzGründerPartner Oderland or network for entrepreneurs Barnim-Uckermark. Both business incubation models are funded by the European Social Fund and national funds.



Keys steps and activities

Young companies

Business Start support by several modules:

Module I: Awareness-raising of entrepreneurship as an alternative to the employment status

Module II: Information and acquisition of participants

- Monthly consultancy days in four different locations of East Brandenburg
- These consultancy days are a key factor for the acquisition of participants

Module III: Contact phase/ Checking on the eligibility of the applicants

- Several locations in East Brandenburg provide information about the Business Incubator
- After initial contact follows an intense interview with the project coordinator. Main aspects are founder personality, qualification/resources and business idea. The interview avoids business foundation without serious ambitions

Module IV: Profiling- & orientation phase

- personal suitability check/ analysis of potential, reflection about self-employment, definition of qualification needs

Module V: Training and qualification

- basis courses
- individual counselling
- webinar: online-courses

Module VI: Implementation & start-up

- formal registration of the company

Module VII: Transition & growth phase

- young companies is managed by STIC, an economic promotion agency advising entrepreneurs after business foundation through several services.

Green companies

Green companies offers several instruments to boost green entrepreneurship and sustainable business concepts:

- Professional workshops with external experts (communication & presentation training, evaluation of presentation, location determination and potential evaluation, marketing measures).
- Networking events foster knowledge transfer between incubated entrepreneurs.
- Revision coaching, mainly addressed to green entrepreneurs who already started their business. The coaching analyses the products' market position and suggests improvements.
- Presentation at trade fairs to facilitate market access, networking and customer loyalty.
- Mystery Check: Evaluation and assessment of the point of sale (product presentation, service quality).

Results

Young companies

Since project start in 2004:

- Number of participants: **1078** participants
- Number of established companies: **600**
- Survival rate after three years of company foundation, if available: 70%

Green companies

Number of participants: **99** green entrepreneurs

53% women

58 trade fair visits (product presentation)

52 workshops

Lessons learnt

Cooperation with regional network partners

Building up a network of external experts

Promoting entrepreneurship at schools

Investment in local start-ups as key driver for the local economy

Decentralized service system: Start-up support service at different locations to provide services even in the rural area

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Summary of the 1st Interregional Training Workshop

The 1st Interregional Training Workshop (ITW) was held on 7 and 8 March 2017 and is part of the Interreg Europe project "SPEED UP – Supporting Practices for Entrepreneurship in Ecosystems Development of Urban Policies". The meeting took place in Potsdam and Berlin (Germany) to deepen the knowledge gained during the 1st Interregional Seminar in Sevilla (Spain).

The 1st ITW was dedicated to Incubation Services and their Financial Sustainability. Main topic were:

Private/public incubators

- International Startup pass to permit the circulation of ideas and entrepreneurs – digital cards for access to free offices.
- Partnership with big companies/ Vertical acceleration programs with big companies.
- Investment/Participation in new companies/start-ups.
- The ITW based on several presentations by European experts and group sessions to exchange experience, to deepen knowledge and to foster and extent the international cooperation between participants.
- The ITW was supported by professional moderator.
- The summary of the ITW gives an overview about the main topics and discussions. For further information and an extended version of the summary please visit the library on the project website (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/speedup/library/>).

Presentations by European experts

Supporting Start-ups – Framework on funding and activities in Brandenburg

(Region: Brandenburg/Germany)

The ITW started with an overview about the "Framework on funding and activities in Brandenburg" represented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Women and Family – Brandenburg. The presentation pointed out the different policy instruments of the European Social Fund targeting entrepreneurship. The instruments are grouped in the main activities information, sensitization and mobilization; consultation, coaching and qualification; and financing. With its Framework the Ministry became a Finalist of the Regio Stars 2012.

Brandenburg has several very successful instruments that are unique in Germany and can be considered as role models.

Important Programs:

- DeGut- Deutsche Gründer- und Unternehmertage: The largest annual German fair for start-ups and entrepreneurship since 1991.
- Businessplan Wettbewerb Berlin-Brandenburg: Germany's largest initiative for new entrepreneurs.
- UGT : Unternehmerinnen- und Gründerinnentag.

Topic 1: Public/private incubators

Berlin-Brandenburg Business Plan Competition

(Region: Berlin and Brandenburg/ Germany)

The Berlin-Brandenburg Business Plan Competition (BPW) is Germany's largest initiative for new entrepreneurs. BPW guides new entrepreneurs through their business plan by offering seminars, individual coaching, networking events and access to financial institutions and investors. Participants can submit their business plan to participate in the competition. BPW is giving a prize money of 50.000 Euro in total. Besides, the new entrepreneurs are getting professional feedback by two independent experts. All offers and services are free of charge. The competition is covering every sector. The Startup incubation model started 1995, 1.864 companies founded and 12.382 jobs created in the region. With a startup rate of 90% among the participant BPW is a successful instrument to promote and boost regional entrepreneurship in Brandenburg and Berlin.

Business Innovation Support for Tech Start-ups

(Region: Antwerpen/ Belgium)

Imec is a world-leading R&D and innovation hub cooperating with companies, start-ups and academics. Imec offices spread across the world. Nearly 3.500 researchers are working for imec to assure industry relevant and life enhancing solution. Imec provides different services for each start-up phase: pre-incubation services, incubation services and special services for internationalization. ISTART Business Incubation Program started in 2011 providing incubation facilities & services setup of innovative ideas. The target group of the program are tech start-ups mainly in the field of nanoelectronics and digital technologies. Incubated companies need a scalable product addressing a clear need in the market and clear ambitions to enter the international market. The selection and investment carried out by the imec.istart fund (public-private partnership fund). ISTART is benchmark as no. 4 accelerator worldwide, among over 500 similar programs.

Topic 2: International Startup Pass to permit the circulation of ideas and entrepreneurs – digital cards for access to free offices

Startup Lisboa

(Region: Lisboa/ Portugal)

Born in 2012 Startup Lisboa is a Business Incubator for tech, trade and tourism start-ups. The Incubator offers several services and programs. One of them is the initiative "The Host", an international Startup Pass for incubated companies. The idea based on the needs of incubated companies who were looking forward to these services. Startup Pass members have free access to and office desk, Wi-Fi, meeting rooms and to workshops & events up to 14 days. Interested Business Incubators can become partner of the initiative in case they guarantee these requirements. The digital card is an instrument to boost the internationalization of start-ups.

Betahaus

(Region: Several locations across the world, headquarter in Berlin/Germany)

Betahaus started in 2009 as a co-working space in Berlin. Over the years Betahaus expended among 4 locations across Europe and co-founded other space across the world. Main assumption is the idea that co-working is never reduced by once place as the internet and the market is global.

Betahaus provides three models of membership. They offer basic services: desk, coffee shop, public rooms to exchange ideas, 3 D printer, lab area, events, academy program (members are teaching members) to Pitchevents (one global winner, around 500 applications). Betahaus main objective is to a global entrepreneurial ecosystem for their members → One Co-Working.

In cooperation with 30 spaces across the world Betahaus provide 3 days of free office space for their members. A membership app gives members an overview about co-working spaces in the respective city/area. They can easily check-in by the app.

Betahaus organizes events around the world to connect the global entrepreneurship scene.



Topic 3: Partnership with big companies / vertical acceleration programs by big companies

EL Cubo – Andalucía OPEN FUTURE

(Region: Sevilla, Andalucía / Spain)

A successful partnership to foster tech-based start-up is the cooperation between Telefonica and Junta de Andalucía. The Accelerator program fills a gap of regional services as many services focused on the pre-seed and seed phase of business creation. El Cubo is pushing start-ups scaling up production in order to be sustainable and attractive to investors. Within eight months companies are working on profitable products and receive guidance by a pool of mentors. The region of Andalucía is characterized by its agro-culture. The digitalization of agro-culture is becoming an important key driver in the regional economy. The partnership is a win-win situation for both sides as the public sector offers building and financing for regional entrepreneurs, Telefonica the knowledge how to foster tech-base start-ups and entrepreneurs. Furthermore, EL Cubo is identifying start-ups who are working on concept for Industry 4.0. Around 34% of the companies acquire private investment and 65% generate income. Another successful tool/vertical support is the mentoring by former start-ups who are keeping on track on the start-ups.



How to encourage cooperation between start-ups and corporates

(Region: Tallinn, Estonia)

Tallin Science Park provides a full-scale ecosystem to trigger entrepreneurship on local, national and global level. With 1.3 Million inhabitants in Estonia Technopol has a clear global perspective as export and internationalization will be the key driver for the Estonian economy. Main objective is to foster cooperation between start-ups and big companies as well as to cooperate with companies on specific challenges/needs. Technopol identify different reasons for the cooperation between start-ups and companies. The main benefit for companies is to gain access to new technology, to stick to new developments/trends and to experiment with new ideas. The main benefit for start-ups is mainly the strategic partnership with the company while other benefits are not that significantly dominant. In comparison to the data Technopol built up their ecosystem to provide services in a proper manner and to meet market needs. The focus during the incubation process and validation lies on mentoring, workshops and to provide knowledge. Technopol offers several acceleration rounds with a global approach.

Technopol cooperates with the University of Technology and private bank on the project prototon to offer a high amount of fund for the prototype development to 2- 5 ideas.

As startup experts Technopol is cooperating with companies by organizing their events addressed to entrepreneurship.

Topic 4: Investment and participation in new born companies and start-ups

Startup Hub Poland

(Region: Warsaw / Poland)

Startup Poland is a non-profit foundation to facilitate technological development in the CEE region. Over the last years Poland is characterized by rapid economic development and transformation. For companies as well as for venture capital Poland becomes very attractive due to the low costs. Startup Poland uses these resources, develops tech based startup incubation models and recruits and analysis high-tech projects from the CEE region.

Over the last years Startup Poland becomes a specialist to attract venture capital (VC) funding. Inspired by the incubation stages successfully proved by incubators from Israel, Startup Poland started with the VC fund's support after the business idea passed the stage Proof-of-Principle. Only ideas meet market needs and VC requirements are getting funding. Mostly, this stage starts with a prototype development.

Startup Poland cooperates with several public and private partners. Well-known cooperation with the City of Warsaw is Startup Hub Poland.

Namely start-ups supported by VC funding are: VPPlant, HOLOSURGICAL





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